



Cancer kills half a million Americans each year. The disease costs our society \$104 billion annually. Every 12 minutes, a woman dies from breast cancer – the leading killer of women between the ages of 35 and 52. Cancer will overtake heart disease as the leading cause of death among all Americans by the year 2000. Virtually every family is touched by cancer at some time. Every person fears it.

Having personally lost loved ones to a painful cancer death, I have a deep understanding of what this disease can do to people, both physically and psychologically. Although the effect of cancer can be devastating, we must as a nation strengthen our resolve to find a cure for this dreaded disease.

Since coming to the United States Senate in 1992, the eradication of cancer has always been an important component of my Congressional agenda. We cannot rest until we have found a cure for cancer. And I for one will not. To that end, Senator Connie Mack (R-FL) and I founded the Senate Cancer Coalition in 1994 to bring attention to the problem of cancer in the United States.

The following pages outline my legislative efforts in the United States Senate to increase research funding. I urge you to contact your Congressional representative to tell them to vote for increased cancer research funding.

# The Battle Against Cancer:

## The Good News and Bad News

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In recent years, there has been some remarkable progress in the battle against cancer. The good news is The American Cancer Society announced this spring new data showing that:

- ◆ for the first time since 1900, overall cancer death rates have shown a sustained decline.
- ◆ lung cancer rates in men are falling.
- ◆ survival rates for some cancers are improving, including the survival rate for children with leukemia.

With more early detection and advances in treatment, more and more people are becoming “cancer survivors.”

### Challenges Ahead:

- ◆ Death rates for other cancers have risen, like cancer of the lung in women, cancer of the pancreas, and chronic leukemia in the elderly.
- ◆ Childhood cancer overall has risen 11% over the past decade.

And, there continues to be disproportionately high cancer rates among certain populations based on race, ethnicity or income level, and in certain geographic regions:

- ◆ African American men have the highest overall cancer rate of all ethnic groups in the United States.
- ◆ Hispanic women are nearly twice as likely as the general population to develop cervical cancer.
- ◆ Breast cancer rates among African American and Native American women in the San Francisco Bay Area are among the highest in the world.

# Need for Increased Cancer Research Funding

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Since the signing of the the National Cancer Act in 1971, the U.S. has spent over \$25 billion on cancer research, but still there is no cure. In the last five years, funding for breast cancer research has increased dramatically, from \$90 million in 1992 to \$600 million last year. But overall, funding for cancer and other medical research has lagged behind the growing need.

- ◆ Only three cents of every health care dollar spent in this country is used for research.
- ◆ The budget for the entire National Institutes for Health is less than 1% of the federal budget.

## Less funding has meant less research:

- ◆ In 1996, the National Cancer Institute could only fund 26% of research grant applications, a decline from 60% in the 1970s.
- ◆ As managed health care expands, and insurance plans choose not to affiliate with academic medical centers, our research institutions are rapidly losing revenues that have traditionally provided core support for research.

We may not have found a cure yet for this deadly disease, but it is very clear that research saves lives. Today, according to the American Association for Cancer Research, 8 million people are alive because of breakthroughs in cancer research.

- ◆ The overall survival rate for all forms of cancer has increased from 39% twenty-five years ago to 52% today.
- ◆ Deaths due to cervical cancer have dropped more than 70% since the 1960s.
- ◆ 91% of men who contract testicular cancer can be cured, compared to a survival rate of less than 10% three decades ago.

Biomedical science — and especially cancer research — is on the edge of many exciting discoveries. For example, scientists have made revolutionary advances in understanding genetics in recent years that help us better understand why cells become cancerous.

Research can also save money. A 1994 report by the National Institutes of Health found that \$4.3 billion invested in clinical and applied research by NIH can produce health care savings of between \$9.3 billion and \$13.6 billion each year.

# Legislative Efforts to Fight Cancer

Senator Feinstein made funding cancer research one of her top legislative priorities. The following bills have been approved or are currently being considered in Congress:

## ◆ **Breast Cancer Research Stamp:**

On August 13, 1997, President Clinton signed legislation co-sponsored by Senator Feinstein along with Senators Alfonse D'Amato (R-NY) and Lauch Faircloth (R-NC), and Representatives Vic Fazio (D-Sacramento) and Susan Molinari (R-Staten Island) to create a Breast Cancer Research Stamp. The law directs the U.S. Postal Service to create a special first class postage stamp priced at up to 25% above the cost of a regular first class stamp to be purchased voluntarily by the public. Proceeds from funds raised by the stamp will be directed to breast cancer research.



◆ **Genetic Fairness Act:** In 1996, Senators Feinstein and Mack (R-FL) introduced legislation to ban discrimination by insurance companies based on genetic information. A limited version of the Feinstein-Mack Bill was included in the Kennedy-Kassabaum Health Insurance Portability Act passed by Congress last year. It bars insurance companies from denying insurance coverage to individuals based on genetic information. A 1992 study by the Office of Technology Assessment found that 17 of 29 insurers would not sell insurance to individuals when testing revealed the likelihood of a serious chronic future disease.

◆ **Mammography Coverage:** In May of 1997, Senator Feinstein introduced S. 727, legislation to provide consistency in insurance coverage of mammography screening for women over age 40. Commercial insurance, as well as Medicare and Medicaid, would be required to cover mammography screening, consistent with the guidelines of the American Cancer Society and the National Cancer Institute. The lack of insurance coverage is a major obstacle to getting regular screening mammographies, studies show, and mammograms save lives.

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ities since coming to the United States Senate. Several measures have been

- ◆ **Tax Checkoff:** In May of 1997, Senators Feinstein and Mack introduced S.728, legislation to create a voluntary tax checkoff on federal income tax returns for citizens to contribute to a Cancer Research Trust Fund. Studies show that 60% of Americans would contribute to medical research in this way and that if the average contribution were just \$10, \$410 million could be raised.
- ◆ **Clinical Trials Database:** On January 21, 1997, Senators Feinstein and Olympia Snowe (R-ME) introduced S. 87, legislation to establish a toll-free service so that people with life-threatening diseases and the medical community can more easily find out what research projects are underway. This database is needed so that people — often people in desperate, life-threatening situations, people who have tried everything — can easily find possible new treatments. This measure is included in S. 830, the Senate Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Reform bill.
- ◆ **Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act of 1997:** On January 29, 1997, Senators Feinstein and D'Amato introduced S. 249, legislation to require insurance plans to cover medically-necessary hospital stays, the length of which would be determined by the physician, in consultation with the patient. The Bill also requires plans to cover breast reconstruction after a mastectomy and for all cancers, to cover second opinions by specialists, whether the initial diagnosis is positive or negative. The legislation is intended to put an end to "drive-through" mastectomies, a practice in which many women undergo mastectomy procedures only to be released prematurely hours later.
- ◆ **Call for Increase in NIH Funding:** Senator Feinstein cosponsored a Senate resolution calling for the National Institutes of Health to be doubled over 5 years. The resolution passed the Senate 98 to 0.
- ◆ **High Breast Cancer Incidence Rates:** Senator Feinstein has asked the Director of the National Cancer Institute to investigate the high rates of breast cancer in California, particularly in San Francisco, an area that has the highest incidence rate in the world.

# The Senate Cancer Coalition

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In 1994, Senators Dianne Feinstein and Connie Mack founded the Senate Cancer Coalition. The Coalition's mission is to bring special focus to the problem of cancer in the United States, to highlight funding needs, identify research gaps, and develop strategies in the search to find a cure for this dreaded disease.

The Senate Cancer Coalition has held several hearings to explore a range of issues such as the potential benefits and abuses of genetic testing for cancer, the status of breast cancer research, the controversial drug tamoxifen, and environmental risk factors for cancer. Witnesses at these hearings identified startling geographic and ethnic disparities in cancer rates in the United States, called for better coordination among the 14 federal agencies that sponsor cancer research, and universally highlighted the critical need for more research funding.

For more information about the Senate Cancer Coalition, please contact:

U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein  
331 Senate Hart Building  
Washington, DC 20510  
(202) 224-3841  
[www.senate.gov/~feinstein](http://www.senate.gov/~feinstein)

U.S. Senator Connie Mack  
517 Senate Hart Building  
Washington, DC 20510  
(202) 224-5274  
[www.senate.gov/~mack](http://www.senate.gov/~mack)



# How You Can Help

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**P**lease call your elected representative in Congress and express to them the need for increased federal research funding for cancer. With your help, we will find a way to beat this disease once and for all.

- ◆ Call your Representative in Congress and U.S. Senator at (202) 224-3121
- ◆ Send letters to your Member of Congress:  
House of Representatives/ U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C.  
20515 (House) or 20510 (Senate)
- ◆ Write letters to the editor of your local newspaper to make others aware of the need for increased research funding for cancer.
- ◆ Contact the American Cancer Society at (800) ACS-2345 for more information. E-mail address: [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)
- ◆ Contact the National Cancer Institute's Cancer Information Service at (800) 4-CANCER (800/422-6237). E-mail address: [www.nci.nih.gov](http://www.nci.nih.gov)



"I will continue to fight for increased research funding to fight this deadly disease, and to find ways to help those living with cancer to live their lives with dignity, independence and peace of mind."

Senator Dianne Feinstein  
September 15, 1997